



Karate Katie

A Play in Three Acts



Readers of the Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo series know a lot about the characters who live in Cherrydale. We know how they dress and how they walk, what they think about, and we even know how they sound. Author Nancy Krulik has made them so real to us, that we know them as well—maybe even better—than some of the people who live in our own neighborhood or go to our own school.

Now it's time to put all of that knowledge into action. That is: into acting in a play starring the kids from Cherrydale. We have adapted a part of Karate Katie into a three-act play that you and your crew can perform as simply or as elaborately as you choose. (Plays are divided into "acts," the way books are divided into chapters. Acts can be further divided into "scenes.")

There are parts for as many as sixteen to twenty people (some parts are for groups), but if you have fewer actors available, some of your cast members can have more than one role. There are some parts with lots of lines, and some with almost none.

Your costumes can be as simple as wearing a sign with a string around your neck displaying the name of the character that you are playing. Or you can try to make or find the right clothes for each character. There are probably some pretty talented sewers who might help with this. Stage makeup is an art, too. We're betting someone's got a mom or dad who knows something about this, and who might volunteer to help at performances.

There's no magic wind in this play, so no need for special effects, but you might want to use some simple props. Your stage can be the front of your classroom or the school auditorium's stage.

Many plays have music—as part of the performance or in the background, to help set the mood. You might appoint someone to select the right music, and "be your orchestra," by setting up a radio and starting and stopping the music when the right time comes.

And just like Broadway, if you like, you can invite an audience to see the performance (once it's well rehearsed). You might even sell tickets and donate the money to charity. Or you might "take your show on the road," to a daycare center or to a senior citizen club in your town.

Now, as superstitious actors say, "Break a leg." It means: have a good show.



Karate Katie

A Play in Three Acts



CAST in order of appearance

Becky Stern

Mandy Banks

Mrs. Carew

George

Katie

Pepper,
Katie's cocker spaniel

Emma W.

Jeremy

Andrew

Manny

Kevin

Mr. Thomas and other
adult black belt karate demonstrators

Woman with a blue belt

Some white belt competitors

Some yellow belt competitors

Mrs. Camilleri





Karate Katie, A Play in Three Acts



ACT 1 Scene 1

The kitchen of the Carew household. The members of the cooking club are busy creating tomato sauce. As they talk, they continue to prepare the recipe – stirring, cutting, mixing, sprinkling spices, tasting.

Becky: Pass five basil leaves, please.

Mandy: *[She passes a bowl of fresh basil leaves across the counter]* Here you go.

Mrs. Carew: *[Sniffs]* Mmmm. I'm so glad you kids formed a cooking club. My house always smells so good on Saturdays.

George: And we always eat well on Saturdays. This tomato sauce is going to be awesome!

Katie: I know.
[She looks down at the cookbook.]
We need to grind some fresh pepper.

Pepper: Woof! Woof!

Katie: No, silly. Not you.

Emma W.: I can't believe Kevin is missing the cooking club meeting when we're making tomato sauce.

Jeremy: He's probably practicing karate today. Karate's more important to him than anything.

Emma W.: Even *tomatoes?*

Katie: *[quietly]* Maybe Kevin just didn't want to be around us.

George: Oh come on. We're the ones who don't want to be around him.

Katie: That's what I mean.

George: Huh?

Katie: We were all kind of rotten to Kevin yesterday.

George: No way. He was rotten to us! He made us lose the soccer game. And he made me lose the relay race.

Katie: Maybe we were all wrong.

Emma W.: We were kind of mean.

Jeremy: I guess we didn't have to keep calling him Karate Kevin...

George: He didn't have to keep bragging about being so strong.

Becky: Or being better than everyone else in his karate class.

Katie: No, he didn't. But we've all bragged before.
[She turns to Becky]
Do you remember when you learned to do that back flip in gymnastics class? You talked about that for weeks.



Becky: *[blushes]* Well, how about that time you taught Pepper how to roll over? All you kept saying was how smart your dog was.

Katie: That's what I'm talking about. We all brag sometimes.

Jeremy: Maybe I'll stop by that karate tournament after my soccer game tomorrow. You know... to cheer Kevin on.

Becky: I think I'll go, too. I could meet you there, Jeremy. We can sit together.
[Jeremy blushes. Katie sighs.]

Katie: We should all go.

George: Not me.

Katie: Come on, George. He's your best friend.

George: Not anymore.

Katie: We're all going to be there, George. If you don't go, there won't be anyone around for you to hang out with anyway.

George: Fine, then. I'll go. But only to see him lose.

Katie: Whatever.
[She sighs]
Just as long as you're there.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Inside the karate gym. Children are seated on bleachers surrounding a center court where the tournament will take place. Katie arrives.

Emma W.: *[Calls out and waves to Katie]* Here, Katie, I saved a seat for you.
[Emma scoots over a bit on the bleachers to make room for Katie between herself and Jeremy.]

Becky is seated on Jeremy's other side. Further down the row are George, Andrew and Manny. Six adults dressed in karate uniforms with black belts enter and begin a demonstration of techniques.

Jeremy: Hey, check it out! The grown-up black belts are putting on a show before the tournament begins.

One of the adult karate demonstrators: KEEYAH!

[He raises his arm slowly and then brings his hand down onto a pile of cement blocks.]

Manny: That had to hurt.

The karate man smiles. Then he and four others stand in front of another demonstrator. Each of them is holding a thick wooden board.

Another one of the adult karate demonstrators: KEEYAH!

[He leaps up into the air with his arms and legs spread out wide. In a single movement, he breaks two boards with his feet, two with hands and one with his head.]

Andrew: Wow. Do you think Kevin can do something like that?

George: No way.



Katie: He's only a yellow belt. But maybe someday he will be able to.

Andrew: Where is Kevin anyway?

Katie: *[Looking down at a group of kids in white uniforms near the tournament court. She points]* There he is.

George: He's such a big shot. Look how he's holding that piece of wood.

Emma W.: All the kids are holding pieces of wood. They need them for the tournament.

Jeremy: Do you really think he can break that wooden board with his foot?
[Katie and George respond at the same time]

Katie: Yes.

George: No.
[Katie begins to slide toward the end of her row.]

Emma W.: Where are you going?

Katie: To the phone. I have to call Suzanne. I promised to call her and fill her in on what's going on. You know how she hates missing anything! I can't wait to tell her about the guy who broke the cement blocks.

Emma W.: You better hurry up. The kids' part of the tournament is going to begin any minute now.

Katie: I'll be right back. I promise.

ACT 2

Scene 2

Inside the phone booth, Katie is alone. She reaches into her pocket and takes out a quarter, but before she can put the coin in the phone, she feels a cool breeze on the back of her neck. She gulps.

Katie: Oh, no! This is no ordinary wind. It's the magic wind!

Katie is being tossed about in the phone booth by the power of the wind. Suddenly, she stands still. The wind is gone. And so is Katie Carew.

ACT 2

Scene 3

Back in the gym, Katie is sitting on the floor near the tournament court. She is now dressed like Kevin, in karate uniform with a yellow belt.

Mr. Thomas: KEEYAH!

Katie: *[screams]* AAAAHHHHHHHH!

Katie is scared. Mr. Thomas leaps back and kicks his leg hard, flips around, and breaks a thick cement block in two. The crowd cheers and applauds.

Boy sitting next to Katie: Kevin, why did you scream like that? You know Mr. Thomas would never hurt you.

Katie looks confused for a moment, then looks around and realizes that the magic wind has switched her into Kevin.

Woman with a blue belt: Okay, white belts, you're up first. Line up, bow to the judges, and get ready to



break your pieces of wood.

Eight children in uniforms with white belts move to the center of the floor. Katie gets on all fours and tries to sneak away while the crowd is watching the white belts.

Boy sitting next to Katie: What are you doing? You can't leave now. No one's allowed to leave the gym once the tournament has begun. That's the rule.

The white belt kids take turns punching and kicking the pieces of wood. Some succeed. After each kid has had a turn, the woman with the blue belt motions for the yellow belts to move to the center of the floor.

Woman with a blue belt: Okay, yellow belts. It's your turn. Take your boards and line up. Don't forget to bow to the judges before you break your board.

Katie and the other yellow belts move to the center of the court. The first yellow belt bows to the judges and then set up to break her board.

First yellow belt: KEEYAH! *[The board snaps in two.]*

The crowd cheers and applauds.

Second yellow belt: *[He bows to the judges, sets up to break his board, and stares at the board]* KEEYAH!
[His board breaks in two]

The crowd cheers and applauds.

Katie gets up and walks slowly toward the judges. She bows, steps back from the board. Her hands are shaking.

Katie: KEEYAH! *[She tries to break the board with her foot, misses it completely, and ends up falling hard on the gym floor, right on her rear end. There is a loud bam.]*

George: *[laughs]* Some champion.

Katie turns and runs away toward the door at the back of gym.

ACT 2 Scene 4

Katie is alone outside the gym. She feels a cool breeze on the back of her neck. The wind gets stronger and spins her around. Then she stops, and Katie Carew is back. Kevin is standing next to her.

Kevin: What happened? Why are we out here?

Katie: Well, after the board-breaking competition, you, I mean I ... uh, er ...

Kevin: The board-breaking competition. Oh man. Now I remember. I missed the board. I mean I think I did. I'm not really sure. It's all kind of fuzzy.

Katie: That's pretty much what happened.

Kevin: *[shakes his head]* I don't know how I could have done that. I never miss the board.

Katie: Everyone makes mistakes.

Kevin: Not me. I'm always right on target. But not today. Of all days for me to mess up. Now I'll never be a champion.

Katie: Well, you could still get a medal.

Kevin: *[irritated]* They don't give you a medal for missing the board, Katie.

Katie: I know that. But there are two other events. You still can get a medal for sparring, or for doing



your karate moves.

Kevin: They're called forms.

Katie: Okay, forms. You know those really well. You should go back in there and show everyone.

Kevin: *[shakes his head]* No way. I'm done with karate. I quit!

Katie: Kevin, you've got to go out there. And you've got to win a medal.

Kevin: Why?

Katie: Because you can't let George think he was right! He'll brag about it forever. And being around someone who brags all the time is really awful.

Kevin: *[blushes and looks ashamed]* I guess I acted kind of stuck-up this week.

Katie: *[shrugs]* Kind of. But it's okay. You were just excited about the tournament.

Kevin: Yes. I thought I would win.

Katie: You could still win something. Besides, it's not just about winning.

Kevin: Sure it is.

Katie: *[shakes her head]* No way. It's about doing something you love. It's about getting better and better at karate. Medals aren't important.

Kevin: I sure would like to have one, though.

Katie: You're not going to get one standing here. You've got to go in there and try.

Kevin: *[nodding]* I guess you're right. Besides, I can't make a bigger fool out of myself than I already have.

Katie: You won't make a fool out of yourself. You know this stuff. Just do what you've been showing us all week.

ACT 3 **Scene 1**

An hour later, outside the karate gym. Kevin has a medal hung around his neck.

Jeremy: Wow, Kevin, your silver medal is huge.

Kevin: It's heavy, too. You want to feel it? *[Kevin lifts the medal from around his neck and hands it to Jeremy.]*

Manny: You really beat up that other yellow belt.

Kevin: I didn't really beat him up. That's not the point of sparring. You're just supposed to show how well you can defend yourself. I guess I did better than he did.

George: Yeah, well, the guy who won the gold medal did better than you did.

Kevin: I guess so. But I'll get him next time.

Katie: Yay!

Becky: Can I try on your medal? The one you got for doing your karate forms?

Kevin: *[lifting the other medal from around his neck and handing it to Becky]* Sure. Just don't drop it.

George: I don't know what everybody's making such a big deal about. It's not like this is the Olympics



or anything.

Jeremy: It's still pretty cool. You've never won anything like this before.

Kevin: Yeah, but maybe he will. I mean, he could win a track medal, if he tried hard enough.

Jeremy: *[laughs]* And if he ties his shoelaces tighter.

George: *[blushes]* I'm not letting that happen again. I'm getting Velcro sneakers for track.

Andrew: *[to Kevin]* Are you going to wear your medals to school?

Kevin: *[hesitates]* Nah. That would be like bragging. It's just good knowing I won them.

Mrs. Camilleri: *[as she walks over to where the kids are]* Do you all want to go out for ice cream to celebrate?

Everyone: Yes! Yeah! Hooray!

Kevin: Hey, George, will you show me how you suck the ice cream out of the bottom of the cone?

George: You want me to teach you something?

Kevin: Every time I try it, the ice cream spills all over my shirt. You're the champion of ice cream cone-sucking.

George: Yea, I guess I am. Too bad they don't give medals for that. I'd definitely get a gold medal. Or at the very least, a chocolate-chip-mint one!

Katie giggles and everyone exits.

Emma W.: Hey, George, do you want to practice running the relay with me at recess tomorrow? Maybe you and I could try again at next week's track meet.

George: Um. Well. I ...

Kevin: That sounds like a good idea. And I'll time you guys. I could be like your coach. That way I could help the team even though I'm not on it anymore.

George: Great idea. I'll let you use my new stopwatch.

Kevin: Cool.

George: *[to Katie as everyone else moves off stage]* Do you want to practice too, Katie Kazoo? You could work on your long jump.

Katie: Sure.

The End

